



*The Haunted Beanfield*  
**PROJECT**

*by*

*Blaster M. Ackerman & Others*



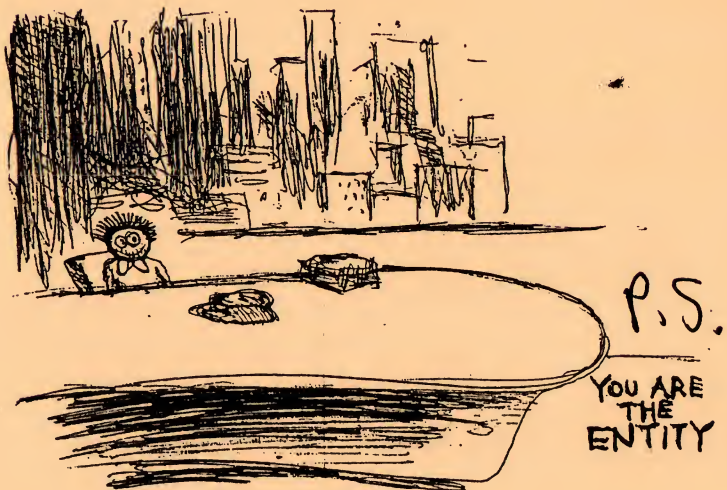
## The Haunted Beanfield Initiation

Story about a haunted beanfield across the road from the farm shack where lived two children who liked to prowl around at night and their taciturn, widowed mother and a graveyard down the road a ways from the beanfield. Now what this story needs to really make it go is \_\_\_\_\_?

Send your ideas and just \$5 to:

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Bean Blank



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## The Haunted Beanfield Story

### Chapter 1

Story about a haunted beanfield across the road from the farm shack where lived two children—Scott and Sheila—who liked to prowl around at night, and their taciturn, widowed mother, and a graveyard down the road a ways from the beanfield. One wall of the farm house faced straight to the west and by the time the sun went down into the beanfield the wall was always very warm to the touch. The man with the big red bandana over his face who stopped his truck every day to have a few words with the children, and who always claimed to be Italian, some sort of royalty, would talk excitedly about how he was waiting for what he called the Bus of Tomorrow to arrive at the farm shack and 39 clones of Betty Page (aged 29) to come out of the bus zapping their laser-beam guns. He usually wound up over in the beanfield wrestling with the beans, and it was on this account that Sheriff Cagle finally laid aside his breakfast beer, drove out to the farm and arrested him as a *uomo che si prostituisce* (illegal Chinese emigrant) and took him back to town. Most of the electric lights in town were in and around the icehouse. Back out at the farm, the mosquitoes continued to sing in the family's ears, and the beans across the road made small, rubbing noises. The sun was very hot. So that was some of it.

### Chapter 2

Heatstroke or sunstroke?

Gradually as the summer wore on and everybody kept forgetting to wear their sun bonnets, the idea developed to have each bean in the field be fluorescent so that winking lights at night resembled glow worms that keep the children safe at least in mind while making Gladys, their widowed mother, think that many living things were



winking their way, thereby vitalizing glands she did not know she had. Because of this surprising and unprecedented glandular activity, Gladys knew nothing about ogen gegaan ging, the answer to crop circles, she didn't even know about the eruption of the yellowstone caldera when you drop two tablets of *Doc Ackerman's Papaver somniferum* in a glass of *madak* and watch the mixture fizz candy-pink all night through drooping, half-closed lids and though Gladys had been living with a painful yeast condition for quite a long time due to her habit of bathing in the fizzy pink nostrum after she drank it, she didn't know enough to think about this in connection with the changes in her glands. And even if she had known these things, she probably wouldn't have known what was causing her body to become smooth and unbroken except for the four arms that now grew out of it, on the upper part not far from what must have once been a head. A head which by the end of the week still possessed a mouth, but without eyes or nose or ears. These changes, together with a scraggly blond top-knot of the sort usually favored by shady neo-theosophical groups calling themselves Hair Club for Poets, or Cats of the Greater Destiny, brought about a situation in which the alert reader will have no trouble being reminded of the old proverb: "*The covers of this book are too far apart.*"

### Chapter 3

Yet even with all the glandular changes that had overtaken her, blotting out much of her former life with the swiftness of eggplant and motor oil, there still wasn't much to do in the evenings except sit around the farm house striking matches and thinking about what the crazy Bible salesman had once told her. Or rather, trying *not* to think about him, for she had caught him one Saturday earlier in the summer trying to look in at the bathroom window, the nasty thing. There he and his tiny black eyes had been, hanging upside down outside the window with

his toes gripping the corrugated tin roof like perapatetic strangler figs, a characteristic which made Gladys a trifle suspicious. After trying unsuccessfully to sell her a line of cut-rate Bibles featuring color maps of Czechoslovakia, he changed his approach and said he was mainly there in order to warn her that the beanfield across the road was soon to be harvested and processed by a commercial baked bean company, and that when people ate the canned beans they would pass such wind as to unleash the Horsemen of the Apocalypse who resembled the Action News Team. He also suggested that before this happened it might be a smart thing for her to remove her shirt and practice doing some squat jumps; the more vigorous the better; and what's more, he would be glad to continue "hanging around," so as to critique her efforts and offer helpful pointers, as need be. This was just enough to make her recognize the old *la poopalo* when she heard it and she had decided then and there to spend her evenings doing less thinking and striking more matches.

### Chapter 4

On undergoing her big glandular transformation later that same summer, Gladys began saying some very queer things to the children. Remaining mostly in the bathroom and speaking in her strange new voice through the locked door, she confided to them that they did not understand what it was like to be a mother of one single child, let alone two, three, or a litter. "Hard work and no return. Screw that," she hastened to add, then crooned to herself in what sounded like a sort of delirium: "Self-forgiveness! . . . I forgive myself for judging myself— I am forgiven! . . . Photos! Cold cuts! J-Lo! A telescope! A \$10-BJ! Oh, and I almost forgot the most obvious: *more evil beans!*"

The children—Scott and Sheila—would stare at the locked door curiously for several moments without



speaking. Then they would return to the window and watch the ghostly lights blinking like glow worms out in the haunted beanfield. After five or ten minutes of this, so profound was the intense and anguished lassitude they began to feel, that it would be difficult to judge whether their thoughts turned more toward hopping a freight or just hopping.

### Chapter 5

Meanwhile, Gladys would still be in the bathroom striking matches to pass the time. The great thing about having four arms instead of two was being able to strike twice as many matches.

### Chapter 6

By dawn the raging, crackling flames had subsided, they which earlier had given off such heat and such glare, illuminating the entire landscape and spilling their redness as far as the dark aisles of the beanfield across the road.

"Damn peculiar business," opined Chief-Deputy Speck after a cursory examination of the still-smoldering ruins.

"Did you find anything, Dick?" called Sheriff Cagle. He was standing a considerable distance away in the dew-drenched weeds at the rear of the property where the lingering pall of smoke wouldn't be so hard on his sinuses, and his eyes blinked in rheumy bewilderment at the blackened ruins of the ill-fated farm shack. "Any gold teeth or gold fillings lying around in there?" he asked hopefully. "Any big diamond rings?"

"Nope," said the Chief-Deputy. "Nothin' like that. In fact, no sign of any human remains at all."

The Sheriff shook his head. "Damn. It looks to me like there's less to this than meets the eye."

Having delivered himself of this opinion he turned and stalked back to the patrol vehicle to root around in the cooler for another breakfast beer.

The Deputy nodded and went on delivering his report to a nearby manzanita bush: "One of them tramps from the

hobo jungle on the backside of the beanfield was watchin' the house burn and he said that just before the roof fell in he saw somethin' jump out the bathroom window. He said it was about the size of a taciturn woman, but that it had a sorta inhuman look. It was plenty deformed, he said, and as good as he could make out, it had four or five arms. He couldn't see it very plain because of the glare, but it seemed to resemble an octopus with socks, only it looked to be barefoot and had big splayed feet the size o' dinner plates. When it jumped out the window and took off, it seemed to be headed toward the beanfield, and the mere sight of it, he said, made him want to vomit. Queer, ain't it? He said the thing was carrying four lighted matches—one in each hand!"

### Chapter 7

But what of the children? What of Sheila, aged 27, and Scott, aged 34? . . . something not quite right there. After the fire and their subsequent disappearance, there was a persistent rumor that the children had somehow fallen under the spell of Pop Fick, a kindly old bald, albino, handicapped Super Scientist who could transfer his mind into the bodies of others (some said otters) but, as you may already have surmised, there was a strained note to this story, something which sounded, if you understand what I mean, a little too Presidential. Much more popular was the rumor that the children had thrown in with "Duplex" Greenberger, the notorious bunco and sandwich artist, out in Spokane. There, the three were said to be operating a crooked dice game out of Apt. 14-B on the second floor of the Dagmar Lawn Apartments, using "cut-outs" and an electromagnet so powerful it not only moved the dice around on the table in a jerky blur that wouldn't have fooled a child, but also actually interfered with the TV reception throughout the rest of the building, as well as making a terrible buzzing noise in the walls. Add to these irregularities the feverish cries of "Dice be nice! . . . Little Joe the hard way! . . . Eighter from Decatur, the county seat of Wise! . . . Heart attacks 24 hours of being



on duty! . . . Pay the man eight to ten!" and other popular gaming slogans, which were audible at all hours through the door of 14-B, and it was no surprise that the whole operation should have been on shaky footing from day one, the only question being how long before the Bunco Squad showed up to kick down the door. The sad thing about the whole affair was that seven or eight months later when the Bunco Squad finally did kick down the door of 41-B, they found Fletcher M. Gregory, the 87-year-old rightful tenant of the apartment terrified out of his wits by the surprise entry and having an asthma attack on the floor. Eventually the mix-up was straightened out and the bunco-boys rushed 14-B. There, sure enough, they discovered the illegal game in progress, along with a considerable stash of checks, drugs, cash, guns, all counterfeit, and a mysterious pile of dried beans sitting on a sort of illuminated pedestal in the corner. (Not actually beans, as it turned out, but "Duplex" Greenberger's dessicated cat puck collection.) In the search that followed, Scott was discovered crouched in the closet, controlling the magnets with an enormous rheostat device while Sheila and Greenberger worked the crowd of 50 or more eager suckers who every night flocked around the rigged table. "Welcome to the real world," was all Greenberger said as he pretended to break his leg on the stairs and later escaped from the ambulance disguised as an elderly ambulance-chaser. While he chased himself, the two children, Scott and Sheila, were able to slip away in the confusion of a rupture in the gas line. Luck was with them and before long they were able to reach Oakland (or Phoenix, depending on which version you choose to believe) where they had some onion soup and were soon involved in operating a thriving honeymoon racket. Some say they debased the racket with the changes that their childish imaginations (or their craving for the white stuff) deemed it needed to be "fun". But then the honeymoon game is naught but haunted children in need of ideas, anyway.

## Chapter 8

*Statement from a private hospital for the insane near Newark, Delaware:*

"For years, I believed that the most mysterious thing on earth must surely be a sperm whale entirely constructed from sperm—but that was before I chanced across the Haunted Beanfield.

"My name is Paul Thaddeus Frankfurter. All that fall I had been on sabbatical from the Delaware State Normal School, traveling by bus through Texas and Georgia, and kept hearing stories of a so-called "haunted beanfield" said to be a place of strange sightings and much crop failure just down the road from the graveyard where I'd been hoping to gather material for my sophomore thesis on "Female orgasmic expulsions or how to bake cookies." It was the peptide season and the town when I arrived was filling up with gawkers and lowbrows. Impossible to find a cab or wagon for hire. So, leaving my luggage with a friendly Bible salesman outside the station, I set off to cover the distance on foot. The beanfield, as I eventually discovered, was situated across the road from a burned-down farm shack about 95,000,000 miles from town. Dusk was falling, and with the lengthening shadows and the vast fallow field stretching away before me I found myself reminded of the beautiful Delaware beanfields of my childhood. Nostalgia flooded me. I stood there as one transfixed, remembering how when I was a kid I had walked out into a Delaware bean field and found four live buzzards caught in traps that a farmer had laid to trap foxes. He (the farmer) would bury the traps under a loose layer of soil and then dump chicken carcasses and broken eggs on top.

"The buzzards would land and the traps would spring shut catching their feet and legs.

"On that day so long ago, I had carefully approached each buzzard, pried open the traps and let them go. A brief kiss had been my only reward, but it had been enough; from that day forward, buzzard breath had been like frankincense to my sensitive, untutored soul . . .

"Ah, precious, precious memories! And I didn't want to let them go, I wanted to write a poem about those buzzards, their kisses, their crippled feet and legs! Only—something kept drawing my attention back to the very real here-and-now and my eyes stared bewilderedly into the wavering, earth-scented gloom of the haunted beanfield and refused to focus. *There in a distant corner*



*of the field something was waving and beckoning to me.* The fact that the thing doing the waving appeared as a very pale, amorphous blotch on the rapidly darkening landscape seemed to exert a curious and powerful compulsion over me, and I acted instinctively and without thought. An exceedingly pale, fair-skinned buzzard? Could there be such a thing? And was it indeed signaling to me now for help? I had to know so I lurched stumbling out across the field and went close to examine it. But it wasn't a buzzard at all. It was something that reared itself back on two fleshly stumps the size of dinner plates and waved four arms in my face. As those ropy arms shot out to seize and enfold me, the thing opened its tiny hole of a mouth and a hiss of muscid welcome came from between its gray and seedlike teeth.

"With so much to occupy me, my senses were not at their keenest right then—and yet there could be no mistaking how at that moment each bean in the field around me seemed to spring to life; winking like a million glow worms; so that the more I thought it over the more I found myself remembering what my drunkard uncle, Alf Frankfurter, always liked to say when he was on the sauce, just prior to laughing crazily and taking swings at people: *'Ahhahaha! The lights come on and the ride begins!'*

"God! Can it be that a scant twelve years have passed since that transcendent night of heaven on earth out there among the winking fairy-lights of that accursed beanfield? The fools! Why do they keep me, the King of Sweden, shut away here from the rest of the world, to spend my days in ravaging yearings. Why won't they believe me when I try to tell them how beautiful it was, being crushed beneath that breed of deformed troll or hound-of-the-hedge or whatever it was that supped and drained me of my precious essences all through the night, and with what frenzy and self-loathing I gloried in the embrace of those four octopus-like arms!

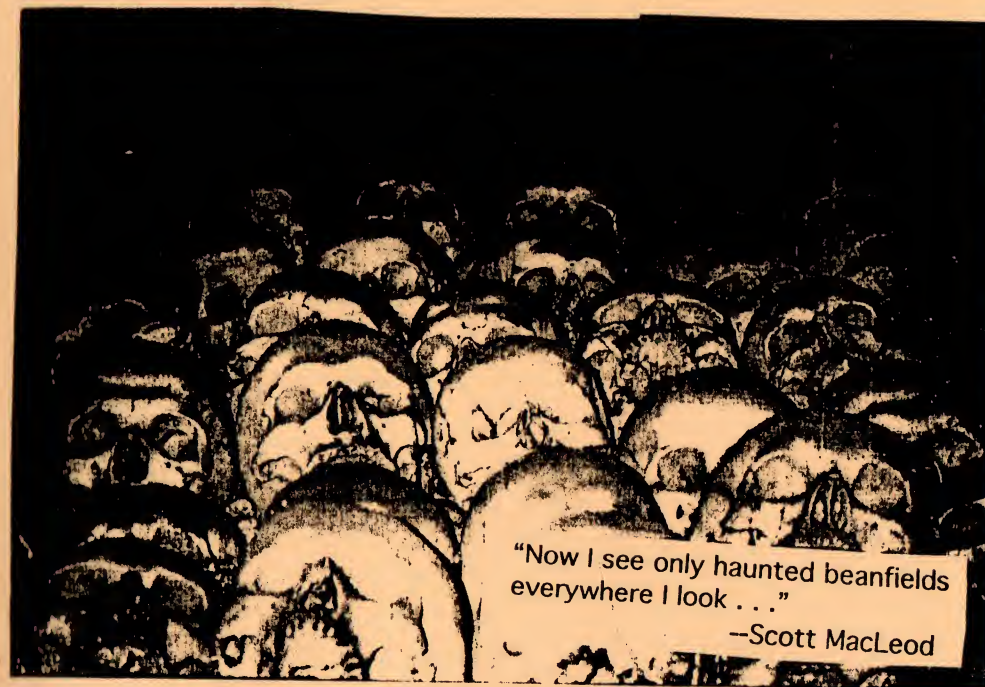
"I could also swear it stole all my matches.

"But look closely at what I have here. That's right! Though they keep me languishing in this dank cell, I have yet managed to write everything down. The whole wonderful story—it's all written right here on this piece of Egyptian parchment which I keep secreted at all times on my person. *See!*" (He holds up a sock.)

## *The Haunted Beanfield Contributors*

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"Now I see only haunted beanfields  
everywhere I look . . ."

—Scott MacLeod



The  
Hauke  
beauties  
live all around  
us, happy



Luna White Pine